

Java Script Incompatibilities with Internet Explorer and Netscape Navigator

Presented to
Dr.Vijay Raghavan

Submitted by
Swathi Chitteddi
Date: Sep 15th 2000

Java Script Incompatibilities with Internet Explorer and Netscape Navigator

Java script has been first created for Netscape navigator. Later Internet explorer also supported this scripting language. These two browsers have different syntax for writing programs in java Script. For the Netscape navigator, the syntax should be as specified by them and for the Internet Explorer it might not be the same. Internet has their different syntax for some parts of the programming. Thus programmers have to write different code some times depending on the browser. Programmers should check for the browser and write the code for each browser differently when any one of the browsers does not work properly.

Internet explorer does not follow all the syntax rules of the Java Script and sometimes gives correct result for wrong syntax. The same syntax used for the Netscape will not work. It usually happens as the Internet explorer gives correct result even when syntax is somewhat different from what it has to be but Netscape follows syntax properly and gives the correct result with correct syntax only. Thus if programmers encounter incompatibility in the two browsers and the code is working with IE but not Netscape then they should first check for the syntax of the program code. For example code is written for reading values in the select box, code should be written properly for it. If not Netscape will not read the values but IE does that even though there is some syntactical error. Reading of the values is the crucial part in the java script and one might encounter lots of problems here if they do not follow the syntax properly. Thus while reading any

value programmer should follow the syntax properly first. Then it will surely work for the Netscape but if it does not work for the IE then try to check for the browser and write different code for IE, which works for that.

Once the values are read, problem arises when one has to send information to some other page using query string. Netscape does not allow spaces in the query string, as it does not convert spaces into hexadecimal codes before sending it to the next page. Thus when a programmer writes a query string with spaces there will be error. For the IE the situation is different. IE can send change the spaces into the hexadecimal code while sending values as the query string. Thus there will be no error for IE and Netscape will have error. To remove this error try to replace the space with some other variable which can be read. For example that can be +. When all the spaces are manipulated, then send the query string but while reading again you have to replace the variable with spaces and take the values. Thus one can get the values using the Netscape but if one uses the same query string for IE, it will not work. For IE one should send the query string without changing anything. Thus here programmer has to write two codes with browser check.

One more problem any programmer can encounter is when values have to be submitted. With Netscape any one can enter the values in the text box and click enter in the text box to go to next page. For IE the same procedure will work when the text box is the last text box. If there are any other text boxes after the text box where we want to submit the values, the values will not be submitted. To avoid the problem, all the text boxes should to be checked by writing a function and calling it in the form tag with

onSubmit. This will check for text boxes and submits the values. Thus writing like this will work with both the browsers and programmer need not write different code for each.

Internet explorer does not allow using arrays for reading the each character in the string but Netscape allows such procedure. For example one has to read each character from EXAMPLE, then usually it can be done as array[i] but this does not work and it does not read the values at all. Its better to avoid using array's like this context when using Java Script. I could not get any solution for that problem and used some other way to make the program work.

The Java Script programs should be written with lots of care. Some times, it is very difficult to find the bug. It is very difficult some times to fix an error and the programmer has to spend lots of time to solve it. This is mostly encountered problem with many programmers. There are lots of incompatibilities with two browsers while using Java Script but it provides lots of features that cannot be obtained with other scripting languages. With Java Script, the user interface can be made very nice and many features can be implemented very easily. Thus many people still prefer using Java script due to these reasons. One should write the code with lots of patience and try to check whether it is working fine with both the browsers all the time. More then that, proficiency in writing the code will reduce the time in solving the problems.